

# The Use of Descriptors with Exemplar and Model Answers to Improve Quality of Students' Narrative Writing in English French and Arabic

Anne W. Somba, Ger Obura, Margaret Njuguna, Boniface Itevete, Jones Mulwa and Nooh Wandera  
JAFFERY ACADEMY- MOMBASA, P.O BOX 82522 MOMBASA, KENYA  
tonymuli@gmail.com

## ABSTRACT

The importance of writing skills in enhancing student performance in language exams and even other subject areas is widely acknowledged. At Jaffery secondary, the approach to the teaching of writing has generally been to use of three approaches: product based approach with focus on what the students composed, process based approach that is focused on the step by step process of writing, and a genre based approach that addressed the requirements of the "O" level IGCSE Curriculum. With the unavailing of the School Development Plan in late 2012 which gave attention to among other things improvements to the learning framework, the department of languages made it a priority to improve the quality of students' writing (and by extension performance). In a bid to enhance writing skills, we have embarked on a quest that has raised certain questions: How could methods of teaching writing be made more effective? Could learners' awareness of assessment descriptors improve the quality of their writing? would a combination of genre and product based teaching i.e. combining instructions on how to produce ideal writing (descriptors) with the examples of ideal writing (exemplars) help improve the quality of student writing? These questions formed a basis for the search of an improved method of teaching writing. This paper explores the use of exemplars alongside descriptors as part of a mixed approach to teaching and learning writing, and provides evaluation of narrative essays and feedback of questionnaires administrated to year 10 students who constitute the study sample. The questionnaires required the students to comment on their preference of the different learning approaches. Specifically, the study focused on the teaching of narrative writing in French, Arabic and English. This approach reinforces the findings of Sadler R.D. (1989) who wrote on the value of using exemplars as a means of showing what quality is. The study suggests that a mixed approach that combines descriptors with exemplars could provide an effective way forward for the teaching and learning of written compositions.

## Introduction

Writing skills for an "O" level student are indeed of great importance. Good writing skills allow students to communicate their ideas and thoughts in all subject areas with clarity and ease. However, having good writing skills gains an even greater importance in the study of "O" level languages – English, French and Arabic – because students are assessed in these areas, and questions on writing skills make up 50 % of the total qualification in all language examinations. Questions are set that require the student to demonstrate ability to: communicate clearly and appropriately using and adapting forms for different readers and purposes, to organize ideas into sentences, paragraphs and whole texts using a variety of linguistics and structural features, and to use a range of sentence structures effectively with accurate punctuation and spelling.

Teachers have over the years adopted different approaches to the teaching of writing key among them being: the product oriented approach that largely focused on the "correctness" and form of the final product, the process based approach (where the stages of writing are illustrated and practised from generation of ideas to compilation, through a series of activities which include planning, gathering information, drafting and revising (Campbell, 1998). This approach emphasizes writing as a developmental process wherein the teacher intervenes and guides students during the composing process. Best teaching practices, however, involve a combination of both product and process approach. (Tang Permpoon, 2009).

One other approach is the genre based approach to teaching writing where teaching is based on examples of a particular genre. In the genre based approach, knowledge of language is intimately attached to a social purpose. It is believed that learning takes place through imitation and exploration of different kinds of models (Kim, 2007). Accordingly, learners are exposed to many examples of the same genre so as to develop their own ability to write in the particular genre. The hope is that, through exposure to similar texts, students can detect specialized configuration of that genre (Badger white 2000).

At Jaffery secondary we have largely tried to combine the process based approach with the genre approach in the teaching of writing: It was noted that students seemed to appreciate models or examples that showed them what they had to do linguistically. Another observation is that prior knowledge from genre generated examples makes it easier for students to produce acceptable structures in their writing. Thirdly, it releases students from deep anxieties about their writing tasks. This is in agreement with Kim (2007) who states

that when people learn new things, they commonly want some cases they can refer to or consider as samples.

The thinking is therefore how these benefits can be further enhanced, especially bearing in mind that the writing students engage in at "O" level is exam oriented, with students being required to meet certain specific assessment objectives to score well.

Since the genre based approach is bearing some results for the department, but also taking into account that the writing component of the language paper is still the underperformed segment, we, in the current study, seek to enhance this approach by using model answers and exemplars (examples of ideal writing) and combining these with descriptors/rubrics (instructions on how to produce ideal writing). This is so as to demonstrate to students the expected product at Edexcel "O" level.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- i) To establish the merits and demerits of combining a genre based approach together with rubric and exemplars in teaching writing.
- ii) To find out how a combination of genre approach with rubric and exemplars can be made more effective in the teaching of narrative writing.
- iii) To establish which approach used in the teaching of writing at Jaffery Secondary School is preferred by students.

### **Methodology**

The study utilised the Action Research Design which is normally used when the aim is improving practice and solving local problems. In this study, our intention is to improve our methodology in the teaching of writing with an aim of improving student performance

#### **Sampling Procedure**

Our study sample is as outlined below:

- 25 students – English
- 20 students- Arabic
- 8 students- French

For both French and Arabic, all the students who take the subjects were part of the study sample; therefore, no sampling was done in the two subjects.

However, the stratified sampling technique was used to arrive at a sample of 25 students whose essays comprised the data for English language.

This sampling technique involves dividing the study population into homogenous groups after which random samples of equal sizes are randomly selected from the homogenous groups.

In our case, all the 75 students who wrote the essays for the study were categorized as follows:

- ❖ High performers boys- mean of 12-15 (13 BOYS)
- ❖ High performers girls- mean of 12-15 (21 GIRLS)
- ❖ Average boys – mean of 8-11 (14 BOYS)
- ❖ Average girls- mean of 8-11 (20 GIRLS)
- ❖ Low achievers mean of 0-7 (7BOYS &GIRLS)

From each of these 5 groups, 5 students were selected randomly giving rise to a 25 students' sample. This number was considered sufficient as language tends to exhibit homogeneous tendencies that occur repeatedly; therefore, more data only increases data handling problems without adding value. (Milroy 1986)

Each student in the sample wrote 2 essays giving rise to 50 essays for the English sample.

Additional data were 40 narrative essays in Arabic by all the 20 Arabic students in year 10 and 16 French essays by the 8 students of French in the same class. A total of 106 essays comprised our study's data.

### **Data Collection Technique**

The data for this study is qualitative: 40 essays in Arabic, 16 essays in French and 50 essays in English. The data was collected using the tests technique of data collection. The students were asked to write 2 essays: one before they were exposed to the use of rubric, exemplar and model essay method of teaching writing, and another after exposure to the method of teaching writing. Additional data meant to determine students' attitudes towards the methods used in the teaching of writing was collected using questionnaires. The questionnaires sought to find out:

- ✓ which method of teaching writing was easy to understand and apply
- ✓ why they found it easy to understand
- ✓ Suggestions as to how methods used in the teaching of writing could be improved. These were administered to 75 year 10 English students, 20 Arabic students, and 8 French students.

## Literature Review

### Definition of Rubric, Model Answer and Exemplar

Over the last decade or so, education has seen a rise in the popularity of the rubric (descriptors). These are set levels of criteria that teachers use to assess or evaluate student work (Forster Marasco, 2007). This can be designed by the teacher or formulated by examination bodies such as Edexcel. Descriptors however can be vague and often contain much technical jargon that makes them difficult to understand for many students. Exemplars, on the other hand, are examples exemplary writing selected from students' work.

A model answer as defined by Huxham (2007) is an ideal tutor generated response that would receive 100% mark. It is this study's contention that combining descriptors with exemplars and model answers allows students not only to know the assessment criteria for a writing task, but also what the finished piece of writing should look like. In short, rubrics tell; exemplars show.

### Approaches to the teaching of Writing

In the last five decades, approaches to the teaching of writing have been the subject of investigation. Among the studies that have focused on approaches to the teaching of writing are: Shuhua, Zhang and Yuanxing (2009) who have studied the integration of cooperative learning and the genre based approach to the teaching of writing, Kroll B. (1990), and Hedge T. (1988) who focused on the process based approach and Nunan, D. (2003) who has written on the product based approach to the teaching of writing.

Other approaches to teaching writing have been suggested and even studied. For instance, Raimes, A. (1983) has proposed the pragmatic approach, rhetorical approach, critical/cultural approach and expressive approach. However all these approaches are, in a broad way captured by the three main approaches to the teaching of writing which are the genre-based approach, the product-based approach and the process-based approach.

According to Kroll, B. (1990), in the process-based approach to the teaching of writing, focus is on what writers do as they write rather than focusing on textual features such as syntax or mechanics. Mirhosseini, S. (2009) identifies five steps followed in the process based approach to the teaching of writing. They are pre-writing, writing, revising, editing and publishing. This provides insight into ways of teaching writing which is the subject of investigation in the present study.

On the other hand, the genre-based approach has been described as one that focuses on models of the target text and the outlining of key features that go into making the ideal target text. Students are then required to write, modeling their writing against the studied model text. (Kim, Y. & Kim, J. 2005).

The product based approach encourages students to mimic a model text usually presented and analysed at an earlier stage. (Nunan, D. 2003). Both the product based approach and the genre based approach make use of a model of the target text. The difference between the two is that the product based approach focuses on correctness in syntax (grammar) and mechanics (punctuation). Genre based approach on the other hand pays attention to the purpose the writing is meant to achieve i.e. is the text persuasive, or is it meant to argue, narrate etc. Learners are then taught the features that enable the model text to achieve the purpose for which it is meant. Knowledge of these approaches to the teaching of writing enrich this study by making it possible to compare the different teaching approaches and ultimately being able to work out a combination of approaches that brings on board the strengths of the different approaches, which is the aim of this study.

### Combination of approaches to the teaching of writing

Occasioned by the fact that each approach to the teaching of writing, when used in isolation, has shortcomings, scholars have sought to device approaches to the teaching of writing that incorporate features of more than one approach. One such study is Shuhua, Zhang and Yuanxing (2009) who have studied the integration of cooperative learning, henceforth CL, and the genre based approach to the teaching of writing. They found the combination of these approaches of benefit as CL ensured that students are involved and, therefore, engaged in the learning process. Interaction between students and the teacher as brought on board by CL increase linguistic choices as well as student motivation. These findings give insight as to how benefits can be reaped from combining different approaches to teaching writing which is of interest to the present study.

Tang Permpoon (2009) has studied the integration of all three approaches: genre, product and process based approaches to the teaching of writing. This study's finding was that the three approaches complement each other and the recommendation was that teachers of writing should use a combination of the three rather than one approach in isolation. The current study differs from these combinations of approaches in that our focus is the integration of rubric, model narrative essays and exemplars in the teaching of narrative writing in three languages: English, French and Arabic.

### Report of Findings and Analysis

Among the objectives of the study were to establish the merit and demerits of combining a genre based approach

together with rubric exemplars in teaching writing. The study results indicate that such a combination does yield improved performance. 60% of the students in the study sample in English, 80 % in Arabic and 100% in French had improved performance as a result of exposure to this combination. However, contrary to our research expectations, there were students who neither improved nor regressed, and a significant 28% in the study sample in English who regressed. Summary of comparison of pre-test and test scores is presented in table (i) – (v) below.

### Report of Findings and Analysis

Table i): Comparison of pre-test and test scores in English

SERIAL NUMBER	STUDENT CODE	SCORE IN PRE-TEST OUT OF 15	SCORE IN POST TEST OUT OF 15	IMPROVEMENT INDEX	REGRESSION INDEX
1	A	13	13	-	-
2	B	09	10	-	-
3	C	08	09	-	-
4	D	12	11	-	1
5	E	10	12	2	-
6	F	12	12	-	-
7	G	08	10	2	-
8	H	13	14	1	-
9	I	06	08	2	-
10	J	08	06	-	2
11	K	07	10	3	-
12	L	08	09	1	-
13	M	13	14	1	-
14	N	11	13	2	-
15	O	05	08	3	-
16	P	09	11	-	-
17	Q	04	07	3	-
18	R	10	11	1	-
19	S	10	10	-	1
20	T	07	05	-	2
21	U	10	07	-	3
22	V	09	07	-	2
23	W	06	08	-	2
24	X	08	09	1	-
25	Y	13	14	1	-

### Merits of Combining the Genre Based Approach together with Rubric and Exemplars in Teaching and Learning Writing

From table 1 above, majority of the students (60%) i.e. 15 out of the 25 sampled in English had improved scores when the test score are compared to the pretest scores. This confirmed our hypothesis that learners exposed to the combined approach, were clearer in their minds what the tasks expected them to do linguistically, and how to go about it. In regard to the three assessment objectives, it was notable that on: i) **Effectiveness of communication.** That after exposure to the combined approach, students used a greater variety of attention sustaining techniques as suspense, humor and descriptive expression. For example “... How could United dare win the league! Liverpool had more talent, Chelsea had more depth and city had a bench that was more expensive. But United ....Ah .....United had more strength, were more daring, had greater friendship”

The students generally displayed greater ambition in their vocabulary in imitation of the models words such as “horrendous” “amnesia”, “rue” “benevolent” among others were all too common.

The use of serial rhetorical questions to start the essay by arousing interest as modeled in the model answer was well imitated by the better student. “It was expected it would happen. Why? Why had it to happen this way? Why was it so hard to get over or “what is this I’ve become? What happened to the human inside me? Why no feelings?” It was apparent students were imitating structures noted from exemplar and model answers. The variety of sentence structure too was notable with student using one word sentences, rhetorical structures, short sentences in serials, and the more ambitious were not shy to use inverted sentence structures “How glad I was”, “Never have I felt this way before.” There was too a boosted attempt to think creativity by a greater number. In the pretest, “I never thought it would end like that”, the model answer personified a shoe that was used and whose life thereafter ended in misery when she is discarded. In the test titled “The fall”, students wrote

among other topics on the life of a rain drop that falls or on life as a leaf that eventually falls.

ii) **Organization.** There was remarkable improvement in this area. A greater majority changed paragraphs at the right time and not whimsically as in the pretest.

There was greater awareness and attempt to use a variety of cohesive devices both internal and also to link paragraphs. "As years passed", "Next thing I know", "Two months had passed", "Then came the day."

iii) **Grammar, Spelling and Punctuation.** There were notable changes noted to in this assessment objective. As compared to the pretest, students made use of a greater range of punctuation marks including the colon, the semi colon and ellipses. "Adrenalin rush; heart racing.", "My fall was coming soon; I knew it.", "Until that one day..." These were not only employed, but there was notable an awareness of the need to gain a given emphasis through their use.

It could be summed thus, exposure to the combined approach did aid in improved performance by the students since it allowed them to use language creativity based on a framework modeled by the exemplars and model answers combined with descriptors and the genre approach.

*Table ii): Comparison of Performance in the Assessment Components in the Pre-test and Test*

COMPONENT	NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO IMPROVED	NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO REGRESSED	MARGIN OF IMPROVEMENT	MARGIN OF REGRESSION	NEITHER IMPROVEMENT NOR REGRESSION
EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION	10	5	10	40%	40%
ORGANISATION	11	5	9	44%	36%
SPELLING/ GRAMMAR AND PUNCTUATION	10	2	13	40%	52%

Table 2 suggests that the margin of improvement on the different writing components i) Effectiveness of communication ii) Organization iii) Spelling is more or less the same at 40%, 44% and 40% respectively. It also shows that some students will regress in performance even after exposure to the combined approach. The margin of students whose performance neither improves nor regresses after exposure to the combined approach is as high as those who improve. This suggest that for the combined approach to have the desired results it must be applied more vigorously, consistently (it works as suggested by the 40% improvement) and repeatedly in English.

The combined approach was observed to have a positive effect in the essays the students wrote. There was better organization of students work in response to requirement of the descriptors.

*Table iii). Comparison of pretest and test scores in Arabic*

SERIAL NUMBER	STUDENT CODE	SCORE IN PRE-TEST OUT OF 15	SCORE IN POST TEST OUT OF 15	IMPROVEMENT INDEX	REGRESSION INDEX
1	AA	13	12	2	-
2	BA	18	18	-	-
3	CA	13	14	1	-
4	DA	14	15	3	-
5	EA	11	14	3	-
6	FA	12	15	3	-
7	GA	14	15	1	-
8	HA	12	14	2	-
9	IA	13	13	-	-
10	JA	12	15	3	-
11	KA	12	12	-	-
12	LA	15	17	2	-
13	MA	12	15	3	-
14	NA	14	17	3	-
15	OA	09	10	1	-
16	PA	16	18	2	-
17	QA	12	15	3	-
18	RA	11	10	-	1
19	SA	17	19	2	-
20	TA	13	14	1	-

Table iii) above portrays that 16 of the 20 students studying Arabic in year 10 (all of whom were involved in the study) improved. Expressed in percentage, 80% had positive improvement. 3 of the 20 i.e. 15 percent neither improved nor regressed and 1 out of 20 representing 5% regressed. This would confirm that using the combined approach is effective in the teaching of Arabic.

*Table iv) Comparison of performance in the assessment components in the pretest and test in Arabic*

COMPONENT	NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO IMPROVED OUT OF 20	NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO REGRESSED OUT OF 20	MARGIN NEITHER IMPROVED NOR REGRESSED OUT OF 20	MARGIN OF IMPROVEMENT	MARGIN OF REGRESSION	MARGIN NEITHER IMPROVED NOR REGRESSED
Mechanics & structure	13	1	6	65%	5%	30%
Vocabulary	5	-	14	25%	-	70%
Content	8	2	10	40%	10%	50%
Fluency	6	1	13	30%	5%	65%

The effects of using the combined approach when teaching the different assessment components in Arabic was very revealing,. The method was effective in modeling for the students how to be effective in the mechanics and structure component of their essays. 65% improvement was noted in this aspect. It was however not as effective in the other areas with margin of improvement below 50% in the writing components of vocabulary, content, and fluency. These can be explained by the fact that these components especially vocabulary and fluency where margin of neither improvement nor regression was a high 70% and 65% respectively are acquired overtime the effect of exposure to an exemplars or model answer to a student's vocabulary and fluency would therefore be very marginal. To be effective therefore, the combined approach of genre teaching combined with descriptors and exemplars may have to be combined with other methodology that address the other components in easy writing especially those acquired over time.

*Table 5. Comparison of pre-test and test scores in French*

SERIAL NUMBER	LEARNER	SCORE IN PRETEST OUT OF 15	SCORE IN TEST OUT OF 15	IMPROVEMENT INDEX
1	AF	8	15	7
2	BF	8	12	4
3	CF	8	11	3
4	DF	6	10	4
5	EF	5	10	5
6	FF	3	9	6
7	GF	3	9	6
8	HF	3	9	6

The data above from all the 8 students who study French at year 10 suggest a similar improvement pattern as in English and Arabic. There was 100% improvement after exposure to the combined approach with very high improvement index noted. These suggest that the descriptor model answers and exemplar approach were an eye opener to the students, specifying what the question required and how to go about it. Such was its effectiveness that the class average improve from 36.5% - 69%. From 60% of the class scoring below 50% to 100%, of class scoring above 50%

#### **Demerits of Combining the Genre Based Approach together with Rubric and Exemplars in Teaching and Learning Writing**

However, contrary to expectation, there was a remarkable 7 students out of 25 who constitute 28% of the study sample in English that regressed even after exposure to the combined approach. Also as noted in the data above, there were components of language which failed to improve even after the combined approach. This could be attributed to several reasons, chief among them being, blind imitation of the exemplars. Even though the exemplar and model answers were unpacked in class, the students were not involved in the process of their construction they did not see or hear the teacher or their peers thinking through the ideas.

A number of students therefore blindly imitated the use of rhetorical questions to start their English essays, without considering what intended emphases this ought to have. "Why was it this way? Why would it be

*me? Why me? Why?* The students appreciate that there are structures that constitute techniques but are not clear how these ought to be employed.

In addition, as exemplified above, as a result of exposure to the model exemplars there was reduced individual creativity. A sizeable number opted to employ the rhetorical question for their start in direct imitation of the model answer.

In some instances the regression in performance could be due to the fact that some students paid greater attention to technical aspects of the essay as brought out in the deconstruction of the model response and failed to give attention to sustaining interest. Essays were therefore technical but devoid of aesthetic/creative quality others copied structures from the model answers and forced these into their writing. There were also instances where punctuation marks especially semicolons, colons and ellipses were either misused or over used “*Red rose in my vase with water in; cherished by the whole family; loved*”, “*As I was the best of the best...*” the ellipses in the third example hardly serve any useful purpose. Or “*Disastrous...Shocking...Unexpected.*” The ellipses in this example too, are superfluous.

Some of the shortcomings were simply down to the level of linguistic ability the students had developed. Of the 7 out of 25 students who scored above 11 out of 15 marks in the pretest in English, only 1 regressed in the test. Representing a 14% regression in the top band students. 2 neither improved nor regressed, and 4 out of 7 i.e. 57% improved. Of 14 who scored between 04-09 out of 15 in the pre-test 5 or 35.7% regressed. It could therefore be inferred that the combined approach seems to work better for students in the higher band category than it does those in the lower bands.

### **Students’ Preference Of Approaches To The Teaching Of Writing**

To gauge students’ preference as far as approaches to the teaching of writing is concerned; we gave students questionnaires with three questions as below:

1. Which approach to the teaching of writing did you find easy to understand and to apply?

***Process based approach***

***Genre based approach***

***Combination of genre based and exemplar together with descriptors***

2. Explain why you find this approach more effective?

3. Please give a suggestion as to how the three approaches to the teaching of writing could be improved to make it more effective for you.

To ensure that the students understood the information the questions required, the three methods of teaching writing were explained. The questionnaire was administered to 75 year 10 students at Jaffery Secondary School .In response to the first question: which teaching approach they preferred, 4 students preferred the process based approach, 11 students preferred the genre based approach while a staggering 60 students preferred a combination of rubric, exemplars and model essays.

Expressed in percentages, 5% of year 10 students would want to be taught writing using the process based approach, 15% percent of them would like to be taught using the genre based approach, while the remaining 80% would want to learn writing using rubric, exemplars and model answers. This means that the method is easier to understand and to apply than the other two.

In response to the second question in the questionnaire: why they preferred the approach they choose in question 1, those who preferred the process based approach observed that it helped them in planning, in understanding the writing task, and that it encouraged creativity and reduced mistakes in the last draft. Those who preferred the genre based approach observed that the approach inspires creativity and sensitizes them on rhetorical devices required for different kinds of writing, while some noted that it is fun and therefore interesting.

The 80% of the students who choose a combination of rubric, exemplar and model answers as easy to understand and apply gave the following reasons for their choice:

- Model essays help them to clearly see an example of an essay that would earn full marks thus they understand what is expected of them from a writing task.
- It is exhaustive- It outlines everything examiners look for in an essay e.g. purpose, structures, style, mechanics e.t.c.
- The use of an exemplar alongside descriptors (rubric) clearly shows them what is right and what is wrong.
- It enables them to realize why they get the mark they do and shows them their areas of weakness and the model and exemplar shows ways of overcoming those weaknesses.

The last question required students to suggest how the teaching of writing can be modified to help them gain more in terms of understanding and applying their knowledge. It is noteworthy to report that 6 students’ answer was that the method that combined rubric, exemplar and model essays was satisfactory and therefore

according to them it required no improvement. Nevertheless, others made the following recommendations:

- The three approaches to the teaching of writing should be used in alternation.
- All writing lessons should provide a model of the target text.
- There should be more writing practice
- More power-point presentations should be used-with colours and animations
- Some lessons should be devoted to the teaching of stylistic devices
- There should be more writing lessons

These recommendations, except the ones that require more lessons/time devoted to writing and the one that requires the use of the computer, have all been taken care of in the method that combines rubric, exemplars and model essays. This is because the method combines aspects of all approaches, provides a model of target text and provides examples of stylistic devices required for a given kind of writing. Moreover, this method can be organized into colourful power point presentations to meet students' needs.

### **Summary of the Findings and Recommendations for Further Research**

Our study was guided by the following three objectives:-

- i) To establish the merits and demerits of combining a genre based approach together with rubric and exemplars in teaching and learning writing
- ii) To find out how a combination of genre approach with rubric and exemplars can be made more effective in the teaching of narrative writing.
- iii) To establish which approach used in the teaching of writing at Jaffery secondary school is preferred by students.

In addressing the first objective, the study established that teaching the writing of narrative using a combination of rubric, exemplars and model answers boosted the learners' creativity and they were able to mimic the model essay in assuming the voice of several inanimate objects such as a leaf, a phone and even a raindrop. Other than boosting creativity, students were bolder in experimenting with a variety of sentence structures with some using inversions: "Never. Never did I think I would end up like that." Others, using one word sentences as "Never." above. An improvement was also noted in the variety of punctuation marks used to achieve particular effects. For instance, a number of students made use of rhetorical questions to engage the reader's attention at the beginning of their essays. Others were able to create tension and suspense by using elliptical dots (...) and hyphen: "drums roll...", "circling – like a prowling wolf.", "fun-to-be with Aliabbass"

Still others were able to create a friendly conciliatory tone by using brackets."( you know those Chemistry thingy's)

The study established that the major demerit of using a combination of rubric, exemplars and model answers was that the weak students tended to over rely on the model essay exemplars to the extent of lifting devices, structures and words in a manner that does not add value to their writing skills.

The students' recommendations as to how the teaching of writing using a combination of rubric, exemplar and model answers can be improved were quite insightful. In short, they suggested that more time should be devoted to the teaching of writing and that lessons should have more exposure to stylistic devices and their usage would be helpful.

Given that 60% of the 75 students who participated in the study preferred to be taught writing via a combination of rubric exemplars and model essay, this can be interpreted to mean that this method of teaching narrative writing is most preferred by students.

It is our recommendation that future research should focus on the effects of combining the process-genre based approach with descriptors and models and exemplars.

### **References**

Hedge, T. (1988) *Writing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press  
Krashen, S.D. (2000) *Writing : Research, theory and applications*. London: Pergamon Press  
Kroll, B. (1990) *Second Language Writing : Research insights for the classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press  
Raimes, A. (1983) *Techniques in teaching writing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press  
White, R. & Arndt, V. (1991) *Process Writing*. London: Longman  
Mirhosseini, S. 2009. *Dialogue Journal in EFL Education*, 24 (1) 41  
Mohammed, S. *The best of Two Approaches: Process/genre approach to teaching writing*, The English Teacher, 35:76-77  
Simpson, A. (2011) *A Process Approach to Writing*.  
[Http://www.developingteachers.com/articles\\_tchtraining/pwpf\\_adam.htm](http://www.developingteachers.com/articles_tchtraining/pwpf_adam.htm)